

Town of North Hampton New Hampshire

North Hampton Dog Park Committee

Notice of Public Meeting

6:30 PM Thursday, May 13, 2021

Mary B. Herbert Conference Room; 233 Atlantic Avenue

& Google Meet

DRAFT

Call to order

Pat McLean called to order the meeting of the Dog Park Committee at 6:34 pm.

Attendees Physically Present: Pat Mclean, Michael Trotta, Casey Dupuis, Paige Libbey, John Dover

Attendees Virtually Present: None

Not Present: Philip Thayer, Amanda Jonovski, Anne Nettleton, Ronni Martin, Alexa Haley, Meredith Vallee

Approval of minutes from 9/24/20:

Minutes were reviewed. No changes were to be made. Motion to approve the minutes; made by -Casey. Seconded by Pat. The committee unanimously agreed to approve.

Agenda Items:

1. Land Update/ ideas

Pat informed the committee that she had contacted Mike Tully, Town Administrator regarding the Rail Trail Committee. The committee had discussed previously that a member of the dog park committee should join the rail trail committee in order to keep up to date on the status of the land next to Joe's Meat Shoppe. Pat had not heard back from Mike Tully but stated at the previous kickoff meeting she had attended that it was stated no decision would be made regarding the land until the rail trail is completely constructed. Paige discussed her experience in working with NHDOT and their time frames. It was estimated at the meeting Pat attended it will be a minimum of 3 years, if not longer. Paige agreed in her experience, it could be longer. Pat stated there are now no parking signs up behind Joe's Meat Shoppe adjacent to the rail trail. The committee feels this land is no longer a possibility due to the complexities of working with NHDOT and landowners to obtain parking easements, and even if it was, it will be a very long time before that happens. Other people have expressed they didn't like that location for a dog park because its too close to the center of town.

2. Strategic Planning

This was briefly discussed. Strategic planning was done at the July 2020 meeting and the committee had several good ideas for future fundraising and outreach that will be tabled until we have a piece of land and begin fundraising again.

At the September meeting, the committee had discussed potentially raising money via the Town Clerk's office when people register their dogs. Pat informed the committee that she has since spoken with Susan Buchanan who stated the town clerk's office cannot accept monetary donations on behalf of the committee but that we are more than welcome to put up signs with a link of where people could donate. Susan is and has been very supportive.

Casey looked into where we could sell T Shirts online without having to keep physical inventory or deal with shipping to buyers. We would provide the design of the shirts and people could order through the website and the website then ships the shirt to the buyer and keeps a portion of the proceeds. The three websites she found were:

TeeSpring - <https://teespring.com/for/how-it-works>

Bonfire - <https://www.bonfire.com/fundraising/nonprofits/>

SpreadShop - <https://www.spreadshop.com/sell-shirts-without-inventory#:~:text=Spreadshop%20is%20a%20free%20online,no%20risk%20and%20no%20catch.>

The committee discussed this and agreed it doesn't make sense at this time to start doing this since we still have physical inventory of shirts. Alexa keeps track of the finances and inventory but Casey and Paige believed the shirts are nearly paid off, if they aren't already. The committee discussed further and decided we should table the topic and revisit this once fundraising ramps back up. Paige made a motion to not sell shirts online at this time. Casey seconded. The committee was unanimous. The committee agreed we could advertise them on Facebook more and committee members would do drop offs rather than ship the shirts. We have done this in the past. The committee agreed it is more than likely only people that are local will be buying them so shipping won't be necessary.

Casey brought up Amazon smile and said we have been generating some revenue that way. The committee discussed that this is a good way to raise money with minimal effort. Paige stated that we were supposed to post something on Facebook about it but never did. She said we should do that soon and all agreed that this was a good idea.

New Business:

1. More Land ideas/ updates

The committee discussed the land topic again. Casey stated at recent meetings we had discussed the potential to put a dog park under the powerlines. Paige has since been in contact with Eversource and they stated that it would be up to the landowners because Eversource doesn't own the land, they have a long term lease. Eversource would allow it however, we would just have to work with their engineering department to ensure the dog park meets all requirements for them to maintain the powerlines. The next step would be for us to contact the landowners directly which we did not do. Pat stated she thinks we should hold off on that for now. The committee agreed.

The committee has been made aware by Phil that the Conservation Commission determined in 2020 that the D'urso Property conservation land adjacent to I-95 on Exeter Road (town gardens property) was not purchased under a NOAA grant and therefore does not have the restrictions we previously thought it did. The committee was hopeful that Phil would be in attendance so we could discuss and get more information. Paige suggested we try and get on the Conservation Commission's agenda for next month to discuss with them and see if we could revisit that land as an option. Pat discussed the importance of meeting with the agricultural commission about this as they had some negative feedback previously. We would like to work with them to do something that works for everyone if this becomes an option. Paige said the first step is to discuss with the Conservation Commission because although the land may not be deed restricted, it's still owned by the Conservation Commission. If they gave us approval, we could then move forward in discussions with the Agricultural Commission and the Selectmen. The committee agreed this was a good idea. Paige looked up the date - they meet the second Tuesday of the month so the next meeting is June 8th. Pat will email the chairwoman to get on the agenda. The committee discussed if there is water at the site. It is unknown. Paige thinks it's in the street but maybe not on the site. John thinks it's unlikely if they are gardening there that they don't have a water source.

The committee discussed Dearborn park. Dogs are not allowed there and Pat had already discussed that option with the Recreation commission when we first started.

2. New members

Pat stated that Jan had reached out to her regarding a possible new member who expressed interest in joining the committee - Nicki Hopewell. Pat stated that she told Jan she would reach out to Nicki either way to thank her for her support and let her know how she could help. The committee discussed and felt we should welcome new members as long as they read all the past minutes to get up to date on our efforts. Paige made a motion for Pat to reach out to Nicki and say she could join the committee with this condition. Michael seconded. The committee was unanimous.

3. Next meeting date

The committee discussed when to meet next. It was discussed whether or not we need to meet prior to the Conservation Commission meeting or not. Paige does not feel we need to. We don't need to prepare a presentation at this time - we are only going to ask them whether or not the Exeter Road property could be reconsidered for the dog park. If they say yes, we would have to go back at a later date and present. It makes more sense to meet again after that meeting to determine next steps. Paige said she's unavailable June 10th and 17th but could meet the 24th. The committee decided to tentatively schedule the meeting for that date and may reschedule depending on what happens at the Conservation Commission on the 8th.

John expressed that he felt Pat's email about potentially suspending the committee came from a place of frustration about our lack of progress despite working diligently on forming a dog park for a few years now. Pat stated that yes, she believes there is not much more we can do until we get a piece of land. But she added that even if we suspended the committee, she would still want us to exist and make sure that the Select Board, Conservation Commission and other boards were made aware that we were awaiting a piece of land and to please contact us if they hear of anything. She thanked John for making the suggestion to revisit the Exeter Road land potential because if he had not, we may not have found out from Phil that it was determined the land was actually not deed restricted. Paige agreed that it is difficult to continue fundraising for a park when we don't have a piece of land. The committee agreed we have a lot of support and have raised awareness in town. This new information that the Exeter Road land may be a possibility gives us something to work on for the time being and if it doesn't work out we can make decisions from there and maybe reconsider the land under the powerlines.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:36 pm; made by Michael. Seconded by John. The committee unanimously agreed to adjourn.

The Next Meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 24th, 2021 pending our discussion with the Conservation Commission.